

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are currently pending. Claims 1, 4, 5, and 6 are amended. Claims 10 and 11 are cancelled. No new matter is presented. The foregoing amendments and following remarks are considered by Applicant to overcome each objection/rejection raised in the Office Action and to place the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration of claims 1-9.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner for the interview conducted on September 22, 2005. In the interview, the rejected claims were reviewed and discussed. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that the above amendments overcome the cited references.

Claims 1-6, and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sasaki (U.S. Publication No. U.S.2002/0181096 A1). The Examiner takes the position that Sasaki teaches or suggests all the features recited in claims 1-6, and 9-11. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Claim 1 is amended to recite a slider that includes at least one partially reflecting element, a holder of a light-conducting fiber and an optical system. It is respectfully submitted that Sasaki fails to teach or suggest all the features of the claimed invention. Sasaki discloses a laser microscope having two lasers 2, 3, a mirror 4 and a dichroic mirror 5 and a scanner unit 8. Although Sasaki discloses a laser microscope having two lasers, Sasaki also discloses that the first laser and a second laser are coupled in a single laser unit 1 (See Figure 1 of Sasaki). Whereas, in the claimed invention, the light-conducting fiber and the laser 5 are not included in a single unit (See Fig. 2). In addition, Sasaki fails to teach or suggest a sliding unit that includes a reflecting element, a holder of a light conducting fiber and an optical system. Sasaki discloses a mechanical unit 8 that is nearly a complete scanning unit of a microscope having beam splitters 10, 17, and scanners 19. Furthermore, this mechanical unit does not perform the function of the sliding unit of the present invention. The mechanical unit of Sasaki is not "slid" into or out of the microscope. Additionally, sliding the beam splitters mounted on a turret into the beam path is not same the same as the slider of the claimed

invention. Therefore, is respectfully submitted that Sasaki fails to teach or suggest all the features of the claimed invention. Therefore, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e).

Claims 2-6 and 9 are dependent upon claim 1. Claims 10 and 11 are cancelled. Therefore, it is submitted that claims 2-6 and 9 also recite patentable subject matter for at least the reasons mentioned above. As a result, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2-6 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e).

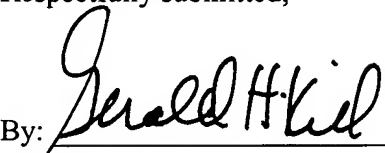
Claims 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sasaki in view of Hasegawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,792,138). The Examiner takes the position that the combination of the Sasaki and Hasegawa teach or suggest all the features recited in claims 7 and 8. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 7 and 8.

Hasegawa discloses an inclination angle of the fibre 4 and the stage 2, thereby allowing the angle of reflection between the illumination light and the direct reflected light to be adjusted. In other words, Hasegawa discloses that the fibre 4 is directly adjusted to a reference point of the sample t. Thus, there is no teaching of a reflecting element to couple that light into the optical axis. Furthermore, the combination of the cited references fail to teach a slider that includes at least one partially reflecting element, a holder of a light-conducting fiber and an optical system, as recited in claim 1. Since claims 7 and 8 are dependent upon claim 1, it is submitted that for at least the reasons mentioned above, claims 7 and 8 recite patentable subject matter. Therefore, Applicants request that the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C 103(a).

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims now clearly recite the patentable features of the present invention. Claims 1, 4, 5, and 6 are amended. Claims 10 and 11 are cancelled. No new matter is presented. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and an issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner feel that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorney would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact him at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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